

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims to read as indicated herein.

1. (currently amended) A system comprising:  
a module that provides a key that includes (1) a unique identifier of a datum, and (2) an  
additional attribute of said datum other than its content,  
wherein said key is utilized by a process that associates said key with said datum in an  
index of said datum, so that said additional attribute is also associated with said  
datum in said index.
2. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said additional attribute is  
encoded into said unique identifier.
3. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said datum is one of a plurality of  
digital documents.
4. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said datum is stored in a database.
- 5 – 8. (canceled)
9. (currently amended) A method, executed by a processing system, comprising:  
creating a key that includes (1) a unique identifier of a datum, and (2) an additional  
attribute of said datum other than its content; and  
creating an index in which said key is associated with said datum, so that said additional  
attribute is also associated with said datum in said index.
10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein said additional attribute is  
encoded into said unique identifier.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein said datum is one of a plurality of digital documents.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising storing said datum in a database.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein said datum is one of a plurality of data that are distributed over a plurality of network nodes.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said creating is performed for said plurality of data.

15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) A software program, stored on a data carrier, for executing a method when run on a data processing system, said method comprising:  
creating a key that includes (1) a unique identifier of a datum, and (2) an additional  
attribute of said datum other than its content; and  
creating an index in which said key is associated with said datum, so that said additional  
attribute is also associated with said datum in said index.

17. (previously presented) The software program of claim 16, wherein said additional attribute is encoded into said unique identifier.

18. (previously presented) The software program of claim 16, wherein said datum is one of a plurality of data that are distributed over a plurality of network nodes.

19. (previously presented) The software program of claim 18, wherein said creating is performed for said plurality of data.

20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The system of claim 1,  
wherein said key is a first key and said additional attribute has a first value, and  
wherein said system further comprises:

a module that searches said index and obtains a list that includes said first key and a  
second key, wherein said second key has a second value for said additional  
attribute; and

a module that sorts said list in an order determined by said first value and said second  
value.

22. (previously presented) The system of claim 21, wherein said module that provides said  
key and said module that searches said index are connected by a network having a plurality of  
nodes.

23. (previously presented) The system of claim 22, wherein said datum is one of a plurality  
of data that are distributed over said plurality of nodes.

24. (previously presented) The system of claim 22, wherein said module that provides said  
key is distributed over said plurality of nodes.

25. (previously presented) The system of claim 22, wherein said module that searches said  
index is distributed over said plurality of nodes.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 9,  
wherein said key is a first key and said additional attribute has a first value, and  
wherein said method further comprises:

searching said index;

obtaining a list that includes said first key and a second key, wherein said second key  
has a second value for said additional attribute; and

sorting said list in an order determined by said first value and said second value.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 26,  
wherein said datum is one of a plurality of data that are distributed over a plurality of  
network nodes; and  
wherein said searching is performed over said plurality of network nodes.

28. (previously presented) The software program of claim 16,  
wherein said key is a first key and said additional attribute has a first value, and  
wherein said method further comprises:  
    searching said index;  
    obtaining a list that includes said first key and a second key, wherein said second key  
        has a second value for said additional attribute; and  
    sorting said list in an order determined by said first value and said second value.

29. (previously presented) The software program of claim 28,  
wherein said datum is one of a plurality of data that are distributed over a plurality of  
network nodes, and  
wherein said searching is performed over said plurality of network nodes.

30. (previously presented) A system comprising:  
a module that:

- (A) searches an index of data, wherein said data includes:
  - (i) a first datum associated with a first key that includes:
    - (1) a unique identifier of said first datum, and
    - (2) an additional attribute having a first value, and
  - (ii) a second datum associated with a second key that includes:
    - (1) a unique identifier of said second datum, and
    - (2) an additional attribute having a second value, and
- (B) obtains a list that includes said first key and said second key; and

a module that sorts said list in an order determined by said first value and said second value.

31. (previously presented) A method, executed by a processing system, comprising:  
searching an index of data, wherein said data includes:

- (i) a first datum associated with a first key that includes:
  - (1) a unique identifier of said first datum, and
  - (2) an additional attribute having a first value, and
- (ii) a second datum associated with a second key that includes:
  - (1) a unique identifier of said second datum, and
  - (2) an additional attribute having a second value;

obtaining a list that includes said first key and said second key; and  
sorting said list in an order determined by said first value and said second value.

32. (previously presented) A software program, stored on a data carrier, for executing a  
method when run on a data processing system, said method comprising:

searching an index of data, wherein said data includes:

- (i) a first datum associated with a first key that includes:
  - (1) a unique identifier of said first datum, and
  - (2) an additional attribute having a first value, and
- (ii) a second datum associated with a second key that includes:
  - (1) a unique identifier of said second datum, and
  - (2) an additional attribute having a second value;

obtaining a list that includes said first key and said second key; and  
sorting said list in an order determined by said first value and said second value.